

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IO-13 CU-02 CIAE-00

COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 AID-05

DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /090 W

-----220550Z 033139 /13

R 211100Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6950

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE COLOMBO 1015

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CE

SUBJECT: JOINT LEFT RALLY IN OUTSTATION

REF: COLOMB 0877

1. SUMMARY. POLITICAL RALLY HELD MARCH 18 WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM MOST OPPOSITION LEFT GROUPS AND CHAIRED BY FORMER CABINET MINISTER T.B. SUBASINGHE WAS NOT ABLE TO DRAW LARGE CROWDS, DESPITE WIDESPREAD PUBLICITY. ALLOWANCE MUST BE MADE FOR FACT THAT IT WAS HELD IN ISOLATED OUTSTATION LOCATION. MAIN ENTHUSIASM APPARENTLY RESERVED FOR ONE EX-INSURGENT SPEAKER. RALLY WAS ANOTHER INDICATION THAT OPPOSITION LEFT FORCES ARE NEARING AGREEMENT ON JOINT FRONT TO CONTEST ELECTIONS AGAINST UNITED NATIONAL PARTY (UNP) AND RULING SRI LANKA FREEDOM PARTY (SLFP). END SUMMARY.

2. OPPOSITION RALLY HELD MARCH 18 IN TOWN OF TISSAMAHARAMA, 160 MILES FORM COLOMBO, INCLUDED REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL MAJOR LEFT POLITICAL GROUPS, WITH EXCEPTION OF EX-INSURGENTS' JANATA VIMUKTI PERAMUNA. FSL WHO ATTENDED REPORTED THAT ATTENDANCE WAS POOR, RANGING FROM 500 AT THE START TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A PEAK OF ABOUT 1500, DESPITE WIDESPREAD PUBLICITY. TISSAMAHARAMA IS SPARCELY-POPULATED AREA, REPRESENTED IN NATIONAL STATE ASSEMBLY BY TENNYSON EDIRISURIYA, ONE OF RECENT DEFECTORS FROM SLFP, AND A SPEAKER AT THE RALLY.

3. ON THE SAME PLATFORM WERE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE

NEW PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC PARTY, (PDP) THE LANKA SAMA SAMAJA PARTY (LSSP), COMMUNIST PARTY (CP), MAHAJANA VIMUKTI PERAMUNA (MVP), AND MAHAJANA EKSATH PERMUNA (MEP), CHAIRMAN OF THE MEETING WAS RECENTLY-RESIGNED CABINET MEMBER T.B. SUBASINGHE, WHO APPEARS TO BE DE FACTO HEAD OF PDP AND POTENTIAL LEADER OF JOINT FRONT. LSSP WAS REPRESENTED BOTH BY BASUDEVA NANAYAKKARA, STILL SUSPENDED FROM PARTY (REFTel) AND P.O. WIMALANAGA, ON WHOSE UNION NANAYAKKARA WAS ACCUSED OF POACHING. GREATEST POPULAR ENTHUSIASM WAS RESERVED FOR MAHINDA WIJESSEKERA WHOSE MVP DRAWS SUPPORT FROM EX-INSURGENTS. TISSAMAHARAMA WAS CENTER OF REBEL ACTIVITY DURING 1971 INSURGENCY; INTEREST AMONG YOUTH STILL REMAINS HIGH.

4. SPEAKERS EXPRESSED SATISFACTION AT PROSPECTS FOR SOCIALIST UNITED FRONT AS THIRD FORCE TO CONFRONT BOTH UNP AND SLFP AT COMING ELECTION. NEVERTHELESS IT WAS NOT SUGGESTED THAT THE FRONT HAD ACTUALLY BEEN FORMED. JOINT RALLY WAS INDICATION THAT ALL LEFT PARTIES ARE COMMITTED TO TRYING TO MAKE A JOINT FRONT WORK. UNP WAS THE MAIN TARGET SPEAKERS AT THE RALLY WHO GENERALLY WENT EASY ON CRITICISM OF PM, CONCENTRATING INSTEAD ON "RIGHT WING OF SLFP".

5. AT LARGE CP RALLY IN COMMUNIST STRONGHOLD OF MATARA FOLLOWING DAY, ADDRESSED ONLY BY CP AND PDP, SUBASINGHE WAS INTRODUCED AS LEADER OF PDP, DESIGNATION HE DID NOT REFUTE. IT WAS ALSO EXPLICITLY STATED THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NEGOTIATIONS WERE CURRENTLY GOING ON TO FORM SOCIALIST UNITED FRONT.
REED

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: OPPOSITION PARTIES, PARTY MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 21-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977COLOMB01015
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770097-0329
Format: TEL
From: COLOMBO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770340/aaaabiob.tel
Line Count: 100
Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 53815cb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 COLOMBO 877
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3052193
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JOINT LEFT RALLY IN OUTSTATION
TAGS: PINT, CE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/53815cb5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009